

Statement of

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Governmental Affairs

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Good Morning Chairman Lieberman, Senator Collins and distinguished Members of the committee.

I am honored to come before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the Deputy Administrator of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), as reorganized under the direction of the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act. It has been my distinct privilege to serve over the past 20 months in this capacity alongside FEMA Administrator David Paulison, and I welcome the opportunity to continue my service with him, to FEMA and to the American people we serve. I appreciate the confidence placed in me by President Bush and by Secretary Chertoff.

I would like to thank my family for their constant support as I have served as Acting Deputy Administrator, particularly the support of my wife Janet, who is with me here this morning. Janet is joined by my daughter Jennifer, who is a young professional residing here in Washington DC. My son Scott would like to have been present, but is a working professional in New York City. The demands upon all leaders in FEMA can sometimes be consuming and unpredictable. But my family recognizes that I have been given a tremendous opportunity to serve our Nation and to make a difference.

My family also understands that service has both its challenges and its rewards, as I have spent close to 40 years in public service. I learned almost all that I know of leading individuals and organizations while serving 35 years in the United States Coast Guard. That is where I began as an operator aboard a cutter, transitioned into the cockpit of a

helicopter, and exercised command from an operational command center. That is where I learned that government really can serve its citizens when they are in need, and can do so efficiently, effectively and with passion and compassion. And, that such service can be rewarding beyond measure.

My journey to this hearing began in 1971 as I entered the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London, Connecticut, and later was commissioned an Ensign in 1975. I gained my sea legs aboard the Coast Guard Cutter Steadfast where I learned to appreciate the art and science of seamanship and the value of leadership and teamwork toward common objectives. I earned my Coast Guard aviator wings 1977, and piloted all of the Coast Guard's helicopters over the next 22 years in the conduct of law enforcement missions and search and rescue. I learned to be exacting in mental and aeronautical preparation as errors in judgment can be costly to men and women in my aircraft as well as those whom we embarked in progress of a search and rescue mission.

As I continued my service, I gained invaluable experience in managing and contributing to an organization dedicated to saving lives, protecting the environment and enforcing the law. I learned to embrace the Coast Guard's core values of Honor, Respect and Devotion to Duty and to make them my own. I gained experience in finance, people management, strategic planning, inter-agency operations and consensus building, all skills that benefit me now in meeting my responsibilities in FEMA. The Coast Guard afforded me the opportunity to pursue formal education, as I earned a Masters of Science degree at the Naval Postgraduate School, and a second Masters degree at the Sloan School of Management at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Building on these experiences, I was honored to be selected for command of two Air Stations and an Activities command. I was particularly honored to have been selected as a Flag officer where I applied my experience and contributed as a member of the Coast Guard senior leadership team in shaping mission performance to measurably affect outcomes. I was selected by the Commandant to lead the Coast Guard's integration into the Department of Homeland Security, and now work to strengthen the Department from a different perspective. At Flag level, I commanded the Coast Guard's Seventh District in Miami, Florida – its most intensive operationally oriented area of operation – and as a Vice Admiral, commanding the Coast Guard's Pacific Area, its largest geographic expanse which included all Coast Guard missions from the Rocky Mountains to Far East - and did both successfully, with benefit of thousands of motivated and dedicated Coast Guard men and women.

I describe my extensive operational background and breadth of leadership experience humbly and without undue pride, not for self promotion, but to submit to you that I am qualified and prepared to accept the responsibilities for which I have been nominated by the President and for which I ask for your confirmation.

Working with Administrator Paulison, we have set a Vision for New FEMA that charts a course to becoming the Nation's preeminent emergency management and preparedness agency. We established an ethos of leaning forward to provide more effective assistance to disaster victims and communities. And it is our objective to develop operational core competencies, strengthen a dedicated workforce, and foster a business approach to business. As we, and every member of the FEMA team, work toward these objectives,

our intent is to better prepare the Nation against the risk of an all-hazards disaster. And when that disaster does occur, to marshal a more effective national response, and work more purposefully to speed the recovery of disaster victims and communities.

By establishing the moniker of *New FEMA*, we recognize that judgment on our progress will be determined by our actions not our words. So as we have turned our words into actions this past year, our opportunity for success has been strengthened by three supporting elements. First, a dedicated workforce comprised of proud and resourceful professionals men and women. Second, a supportive Congress who has provided the tools we need in the form of legislation and constructive oversight. Third, an operational focused President and Secretary who have requested the resources that we need and demonstrated confidence in our leadership and decision making.

Though difficult and challenging to walk beyond the shadow of Katrina, that vision is steadily being replaced by a more confident and competent New FEMA. It was New FEMA that responded to tornadoes in Florida, Georgia and Alabama; to the Nor'easter that ran across New England last Fall, the floods and ice storms that have (and are now) plaguing the mid-West, and most recently, the wildfires in California. Now to be sure our success was enhanced by engaged partnerships across our Federal, State and local jurisdictions, the non-governmental organizations and the private sector, but the leadership was New FEMA.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Collins and distinguished Members of the committee, I thank you again for considering my nomination. If confirmed, I pledge to continue working closely

with you to achieve the objective that we share, and that is to ensure the safety and security of the American people. I thank you and look forward to responding to your questions.